

June 25, 2013

VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Ex Parte Presentation in Docket Nos. GN 13-5, WC 03-109, WC 05-337, GN 12-228, GN 12-353, WC 11-42, WC 10-90, CC 02-6

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On June 26, 2013 Edyael Casaperalta of the Rural Broadband Policy Group and representatives of the National Rural Assembly, Frank Estrada of the Greater Caldwell County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Terry Supahan of Redwood Coast Connect, Beth O'Connor of the Virginia Rural Health Association, Marnie Werner of the Center for Rural Policy and Development, and Rev. James Patterson of the Partnership of African American Churches, met with Wireline Competition Bureau officials, including Kim Scardino, Tim Stelzig, Lisa Hone, Anita Patankar-Stoll, and Radhika Karmarkar, and with staff from the office of Acting Chairperson Clyburn, including Rebekah Goodheart, and Dave Grimaldi.

National Rural Assembly representatives advocated for maintaining consumer protections that have allowed access to affordable and reliable voice services, including plain old telephone service in rural communities, and for extending these consumer protections onto Voice Over Internet Protocol and wireless services. They described the challenges of many rural Americans that do not have access to wireless and broadband services, and expressed their concern with ensuring public safety if regulations are eliminated from copper service and pre-empted from other communications services. Finally, they encouraged the FCC officials to prevent telephone companies from discontinuing plain old telephone service, especially in areas that have no other means of communication.

Rev. Patterson added that one of the challenges in his community is that incumbent providers claim they have plans to serve the community, but in reality have not intention to do so and prevent other providers from stepping in to fulfill the need. Ms. Casaperalta encouraged the Commission to create opportunities for non-incumbent, small rural providers to access Universal Service Funding to serve unserved communities.

National Rural Assembly representatives also expressed their support for the Lifeline Program as a vital option to address the challenges students in rural areas face in accessing service at home, particularly those who live far away from an E-rate funded school or library.

National Rural Assembly representatives shared the attached handouts with Wireline Competition Bureau officials and the staff of Acting Chairperson Clyburn. In sum, these handouts support: the Lifeline program, competition in the telecommunications ecosystem, universal broadband deployment, measures to increase affordable telephone and broadband service, municipal broadband networks, making Connect America Funds available to non-eligible telecommunications carriers, consumer protections and open internet principles.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Edyael Casaperalta  
Rural Broadband Policy Group Coordinator  
Center for Rural Strategies